

In the spirit of cooperation and reconciliation, Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr. today said he will invite a member of the Will County Board to serve on the Board of Directors of the Abraham Lincoln National Airport Commission (ALNAC).

"I am encouraged by a new sense of cooperation from Will County leaders Jim Moustis and Larry Walsh. In keeping with the holiday spirit, I am inviting leaders in Will County to join other Southland communities in building Chicago's Third Airport," Jackson said. "Specifically, I am recommending that the Will County Board and the so-called Iron Ring mayors each have representation on the Lincoln Airport Commission's seven-member Board."

"Under state law, any municipality can join our authority. However, today, for the first time, I am extending that same offer to the Will County Board," Jackson said. "We want more Will County leaders at the table when important decisions are made relative to off-site infrastructure, future land acquisition, commercial development, and zoning and planning."

He added: "The door also remains open for Will County communities. Under our plan, each community that joins the Commission by adopting the Intergovernmental Agreement earns a share in the profits."

Under ALNAC's bylaws, the seven-member Board of Directors is comprised of the mayors of its four founding communities -- University Park, Park Forest, Bensenville and Elk Grove Village -- plus one appointee each by the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association; the so-called "Iron Ring" communities surrounding the airport site; and the Governor. To date,

the latter two slots remain vacant.

"I will ask the Governor to use his appointment to name a representative from the Will County government," Jackson said.

"I've always believed that the Southland and Will County officials want to build an airport. And I firmly believe that everyone has something important to contribute to that effort."